

Why get a flu shot? Protect yourself and family

The flu is more serious than the common cold, so do everything you can to prevent it. A flu shot (or nasal spray) is your best defense. The vaccine is safe, won't make you sick, and generally has few side effects.

The flu virus changes often, and the protection from the vaccine only lasts for about a year. That's why you should get a flu shot every year, preferably in the fall.

Flu shots are available at no charge to our members when given at a Kaiser Permanente medical facility. Find flu clinic information and hotlines in your area.



Who should get a flu shot?

The CDC recommends everyone 6 months and older get a flu vaccination every year.

The flu shot helps prevent you from getting the flu and from spreading it to others. Even healthy people can develop serious complications or even die from the flu — so protect yourself and your loved ones by getting vaccinated.

For the most up-to-date information, including vaccine availability, call the 24-hour flu hotline at **866-70-NOFLU (866-706-6358)** or **711** (TTY hearing/speech impaired).

Vaccination is especially important for:

- people 50 years and older
- children 6 months through 4 years old
- women who are or will be pregnant during flu season
- people with chronic medical conditions or weakened immune systems
- people who live in nursing homes and other long-term care centers
- health care workers
- people who live with or care for anyone at high risk for flu-related complications

Complications of flu can include bacterial pneumonia, ear infections, sinus infections, dehydration, and worsening of chronic medical conditions, such as congestive heart failure, asthma, or diabetes.

Why kids should get a flu shot

Children can spread the flu easily to adults and other children. Getting vaccinated also helps protect infants (who cannot receive a flu shot), pregnant women, the elderly, and people with chronic conditions.

Make sure your children get all recommended vaccinations on time. Check your child's immunization record.